

## Assessment of strengths on youths court-referred to residential treatment

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# Assessment of Strengths among Youths Court-Referred to Residential Treatment

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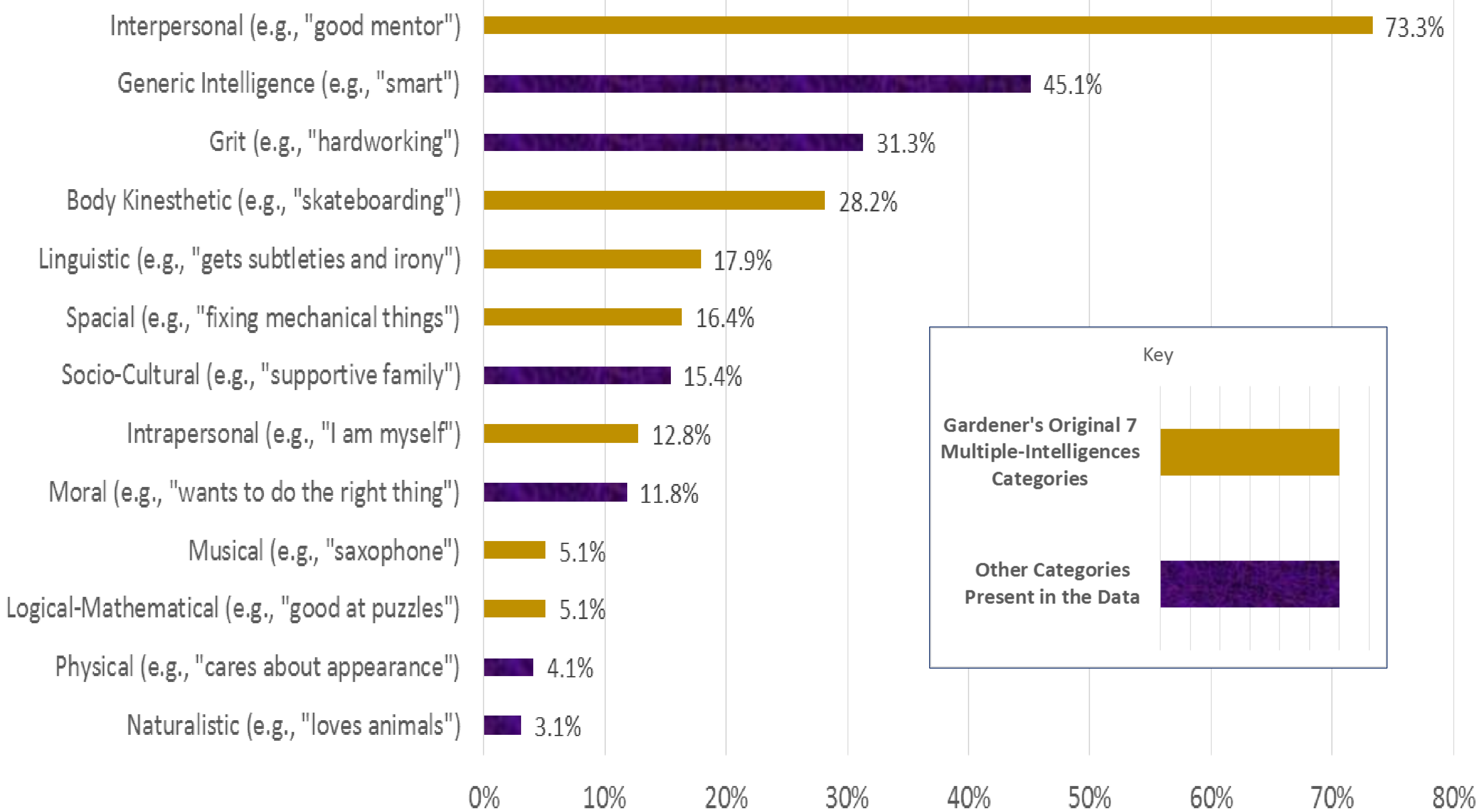
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## INTRODUCTION

- Client strengths recorded at intake nationwide in US yet few empirical reports
- Study questions:
  - What are prevalent strengths among adolescents with addiction?
  - Do strengths vary by gender or race?
- Exploratory study (N=195)
  - 52% F, 32% minority, ages 14-18
  - 92% thc dependent, 61% etoh dependent

## FIGURE 1: FREQUENCY OF STRENGTHS



## RESULTS

- M=3.3 strengths, range=0-9, 9% 0 strengths
- Most and least common strengths (Figure 1)
  - ↑ : interpersonal, hard-working
  - ↓ : intrapersonal (emotional intelligence)
- Race and gender comparisons (Figure 2)
  - African-American girls reported fewer strengths than White girls and African American boys

## METHODS

- Counselors recorded strengths at intake
  - Open-ended questions to youth, guardian
- Responses coded into Gardner's 7 multiple intelligence categories + 6 others
- Count of strengths compared across gender and race groups using univariate analyses

Gardner<sup>1,2</sup> challenged the idea that intelligence can be accurately represented by a single ability. In this study, youths' strengths mapped well to Gardner's 7 multiple-intelligence categories (gold bars in Figure 1). In addition, several additional categories were present in the data (purple bars in Figure 1): most notably "grit," championed by Duckworth<sup>3</sup>, representing hard work, tenacity, ambition, & perseverance.

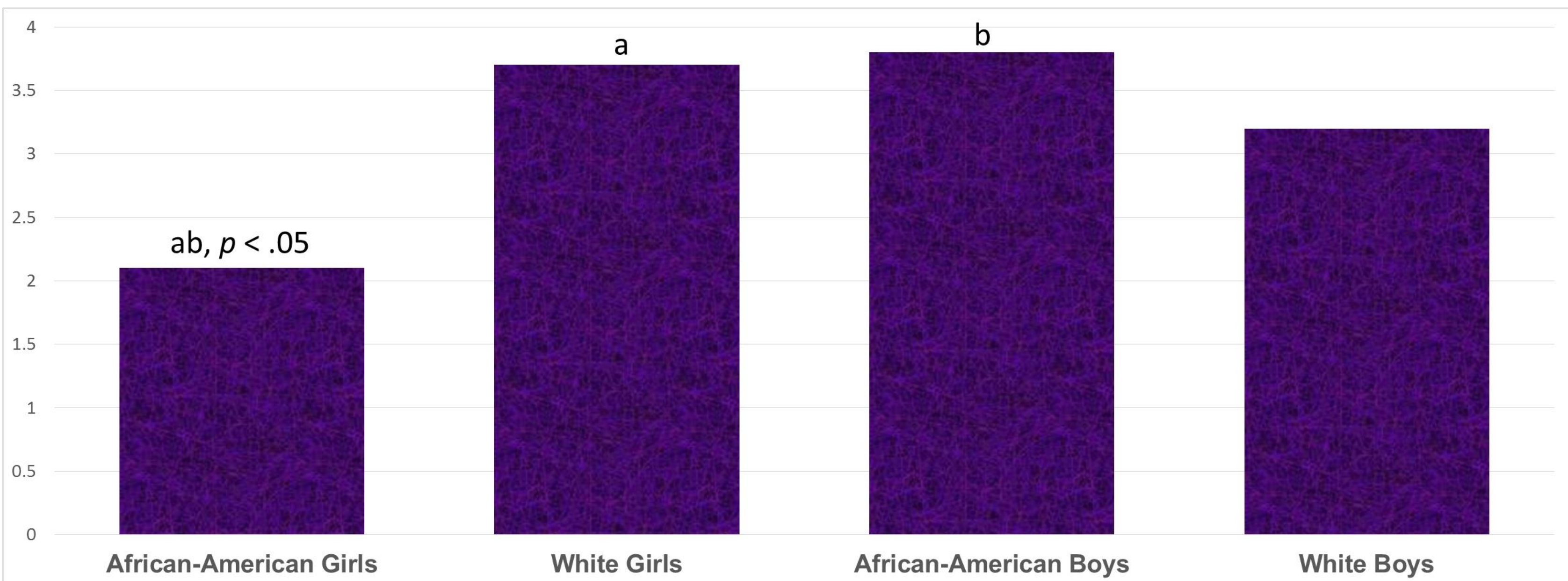
## DISCUSSION

- Self-management/reflection may need bolstering
- Unclear how strengths are used in treatment planning without manualized guide
- A uniform assessment tool may help youth become aware of their strengths

## REFERENCES

1. Gardner, H. (2011). Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences (3 ed). NY: Basic Books.
2. Gardner, H. E. (2000). Intelligence reframed: multiple intelligences for the 21st century. NY: Basic Books.
3. Duckworth, A. (2016). Grit: The power of passion & perseverance. NY: Scribner/Simon & Schuster.

## FIGURE 2: RACE AND GENDER DIFFERENCES



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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